

CHAPTER 5

SOME MEN NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE.

Now, in the next place, I shall come to some application of the truth of that which hath been spoken; but I shall in the first place speak something to the second doctrine, and then afterwards I shall speak something by way of use and application to this first doctrine.

The second doctrine now to be spoken to, is to show, that THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW BUT UNDER GRACE.

“For ye are not under the law, but under grace” (^{<4164}Romans 6:14).

You may well remember that from these words I did observe these two great truths of the Lord — *First*, That there are some in Gospel times that are under the law, or Covenant of Works. *Secondly*, That there is never a believer under the law, or Covenant of Works, but under grace. I have spoken something to the former of these truths — to wit, that there are some under the law, together with who they are, and what their condition is, that are under it. Now I am to speak to the second, and to show you who they are, and what their condition is, that are under that.

But before I come to that, I shall speak a few words to show you what the word “grace” in this place signifies; [I touched upon this in the first doctrine] for the word “grace” in the Scripture referreth sometimes to favor with men (^{<4700}Esther 3:7; ^{<4630}Genesis 33:10; ^{<4630}Genesis 39:4; ^{<4630}Genesis 50:4). Sometimes to holy qualifications of saints (^{<4700}2 Corinthians 8:7). And sometimes to hold forth the condescension of Christ in coming down from the glory which He had with His Father before the world was, to be made of no reputation, and a servant to men (^{<4700}2 Corinthians 8:9; ^{<4700}Philippians 2:7). Again: sometimes it is taken for the free, rich, and unchangeable love of God to man, through Jesus Christ, that for our cause and sakes did make Himself poor; and so it is to be understood in these words, “For ye are not under the law,” to be cursed,

and damned, and sent headlong to Hell, “but” you are “under grace,” to be saved, to be pardoned, to be preserved, “and kept by the mighty power of God, through faith,” which alone is the gift of grace, “unto eternal glory.” This one Scripture alone proves the same — “For by grace are ye saved” (⁴⁰⁸Ephesians 2:8), by free grace, by rich grace, by unchangeable grace. And you are saved from the curse of the law; from the power, guilt, and filth of sin; from the power, malice, madness, and rage of the devil; from the wishes, curses, and desires of wicked men; from the hot, scalding, flaming, fiery furnace of Hell; from being arraigned as malefactors, convinced, judged, condemned, and fettered with the chains of our sins to the devils to all eternity; and all this freely, freely by His grace (⁴¹²Romans 3:24) by rich grace unchangeable grace; for, saith He,

“I am the LORD, I change not:
therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (³⁰⁶Malachi 3:6).

This is grace indeed.

The word “grace,” therefore, in this Scripture (⁴¹⁴Romans 6:14) is to be understood of the free love of God in Christ to sinners, by virtue of the new covenant, in delivering them from the power of sin, from the curse and condemning power of the old covenant, from the destroying nature of sin, by its continual workings; as is all evident if you read with understanding the words as they lie — “For,” saith he, “sin shall not have dominion over you,” or, it shall not domineer, reign, or destroy you, though you have transgressed against the Covenant of Works, the law; and the reason is rendered in these words, “For ye are not under the law” — that is, under that which accuseth, chargeth, condemneth and brings execution on the soul for sin, — “but under grace;” that is, under that which frees you, forgives you, keeps you, and justifies you from all your sins, adversaries, or whatever may come in to lay anything to your charge to damn you. For that is truly called grace in this sense that doth set a man free from all his sins, deliver him from all the curses of the law, and what else can be laid to His charge, freely, without any foresight in God to look at what good will be done by the party that hath offended; and also that doth keep the soul by the same power through faith — which also is his own proper gift — unto eternal glory.

Again; that it is a pardon not conditional, but freely given, consider, first, it is set in opposition to works — “Ye are not under the law.” Secondly, The promise that is made to them (saying, “Sin shall not have dominion over you”) doth not run with any condition as on their part to be done; but merely and alone because they were under, or because they had the grace of God extended to them. “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for,” mark the reason, “ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

The words being thus opened, and the truth thus laid down, HOW THERE IS NEVER A BELIEVER UNDER THE COVENANT OF WORKS, BUT UNDER GRACE, the free, rich, unchangeable love of God, it remaineth that, in the first place, we prove the doctrine, and after that proceed.

THE DOCTRINE PROVED.

Now in the doctrine there are two things to be considered and proved —

1. That believers are under grace.
2. Not under the law as a Covenant of Works; for so you must understand me. For these two we need go no further than the very words themselves; the first part of the words proves the first part of the doctrine, “Ye are not under the law;” the second part proves the other, “but” ye are “under grace.” But besides these, consider with me a few things for the demonstrating of these truths, as,

First. They are not under the law, because their sins are pardoned, which could not be if they were dealt withal according to the law, and their being under it; for the law alloweth of no repentance, but accuseth, curseth and condemneth every one that is under it —

“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are
written in the Book of the Law to do them”

(~~ROM~~ Galatians 3:10).

But, I say, believers having their sins forgiven them, it is because they are under another, even a new covenant — “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with them.” — “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (~~ROM~~ Hebrews 8:12).

Second. They are not under the law, because their sins and iniquities are not only forgiven, but they are forgiven them freely. They that stand in the first covenant, and continue there, are to have never a sin forgiven them unless they can give God a complete satisfaction; for the law calls for it at their hands, saying, “Pay me that thou owest.” O! but when God deals with His saints by the Covenant of Grace it is not so; for it is said, “And when” He saw “they had nothing to pay, He frankly” and freely “forgave them” all — “I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely.” — I will blot “out thy transgressions for Mine own sake,” etc. (⁴⁰⁴Luke 7:42; ²⁴⁴Hosea 14:4; ²⁴²Isaiah 43:25).

Third. The saints are not under the law, because the righteousness that they stand justified before God in is not their own actual righteousness by the law, but by imputation, and is really the righteousness of Another — namely, of God in Christ (⁴¹²2 Corinthians 5:21; ³⁰⁸Philippians 3:9). “Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all,” that is, imputed to “them that believe” (³¹²Romans 3:22). But if they were under the old covenant, the Covenant of Works, then their righteousness must be their own, [But it is impossible that the righteousness of man by the law should save him.] or no forgiveness of sins — “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?” but if thou transgress, “sin lieth at the door,” saith the law (⁰⁰⁰⁷Genesis 4:7).

Fourth. In a word, whatsoever they do receive, whether it be conversion to God; whether it be pardon of sin; whether it be faith or hope; whether it be righteousness; whether it be strength” whether it be the Spirit, or the fruits thereof; whether it be victory over sin, death, or Hell; whether it be Heaven, everlasting life, and glory inexpressible; or whatsoever it be, it comes to them freely, God having no first eye to what they would do, or should do, for the obtaining of the same. But to take this in pieces —

1. In a word, are they converted? God finds them first, for, saith He, “I am found of them that sought Me not” (²⁶¹Isaiah 65:1).
2. Have they pardon of sin? They have that also freely, — “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely” (²⁴⁴Hosea 14:4).

3. Have they faith? It is the gift of God in Christ Jesus, and He is not only the Author, that is, the beginner thereof, but He doth also perfect the same (^{<3810>}Hebrews 12:2).

4. Have they hope? It is God that is the first cause thereof —

“Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope” (^{<4349>}Psalms 119:49).

5. Have they righteousness? It is the free gift of God (^{<4857>}Romans 5:17).

6. Have they strength to do the work of God in their generations, or any other thing that God would have them do? That also is a free gift from the Lord, for without Him we neither do nor can do anything (^{<4656>}John 15:5).

7. Have we comfort, or consolation? We have it not for what we have done, but from God through Christ; for He is the God of all comforts and consolation (^{<4700>}2 Corinthians 1:3-7).

8. Have we the Spirit, or the fruits thereof? it is the gift of the Father — “how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him (^{<4113>}Luke 11:13)? “Thou has wrought all our works in us” (^{<2342>}Isaiah 26:12). And so, I say, whether it be victory over sin, death, Hell, or the devil, it is given us by the victory of Christ — “But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (^{<4657>}1 Corinthians 15:57; ^{<4724>}Romans 7:24, 25). Heaven and glory it is also the gift of Him who giveth us richly all things to enjoy (^{<4254>}Matthew 25:34).

So that these things, if they be duly and soberly considered, will give satisfaction in this thing. I might have added many more for the clearing of these things; as 1. When God came to man to convert him, He found him a dead man (^{<4001>}Ephesians 2:1, 2). He found him an enemy to God, Christ, and the salvation of his own soul; He found him wallowing in all manner of wickedness; He found him taking pleasure therein; with all delight and greediness. 2. He was fain to quicken him by putting His Spirit into him, and to translate him by the mighty operation thereof. He was fain to reveal Christ Jesus unto him, man being altogether senseless and ignorant of this blessed Jesus (^{<4125>}Matthew 11:25,27; ^{<4001>}1 Corinthians 2:7-10). 4. He was

fain to break the snare of the devil, and to let poor man, poor bound and fettered man, out of the chains of the enemy.